

ATTITUDES OF PATRONS IN UNIFIED SCHOOL  
DISTRICT NO. 473 TOWARD SELECTED  
EDUCATIONAL IDEAS AND PROGRAMS

by

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## INTRODUCTION

### Background of the Problem

The twentieth century American society is striving toward more goals, and at a faster pace, than ever before in the history of our country. Certainly, one of the aims of the American people is to provide for its young people the finest education possible. For this reason, school administrators and boards of education will be involved in the amelioration of educational programs for quite some time. In the whole process of educational improvement, there is inevitable accompanying change.

The educational changes that are sweeping across our continent are also present in Kansas. During 1965, the Kansas legislature passed an act providing for a uniform system of free public schools for grades kindergarten through twelve. Starting with the 1966-67 school term, Kansas will no longer have separate elementary and high school districts. Rather, a single unified district, having a six member board, will be responsible for the education of all students, kindergarten through grade twelve.

The former Chapman Rural High School District, located essentially in and around the area of Chapman, Kansas, in Dickinson County included eleven common school districts for the purpose of providing elementary instruction. Recent Kansas law has unified ten of these districts into one unified

district referred to as Unified School District No. 473 with offices at Chapman. Table I on page 3 lists these ten districts. The one district which was excluded became a part of the Hope Unified School District No. 481 with offices at Hope, Kansas. The total enrollment for Unified School District No. 473 as of September 10, 1965 was 1,171 students. The number of teachers employed was 72. This report concerned itself with eight of the schools shown on Table I on page 3. They were: Rural Center, Blue Ridge, Navarre, Talmage, Upland, Manchester, Detroit, and Carlton. The Chapman and Carry Creek districts were excluded from the study because they had different administrative and instructional organization. Carry Creek provided for the instruction of grades 1-6, sending their seventh and eighth graders to the Chapman School. The Chapman District had two buildings, one at Chapman and the other at Enterprise. They used the 6-2 plan of instruction and had the services of a full-time administrator. All of the schools in the study area used the 1-8 plan of instruction. Each of the districts in the study area had a single school building. At the time of the study, the study area included 35 teachers and 581 students. A more extensive description of the schools in the study area follows in this paper in the section entitled Importance of the Study beginning on page 4.

TABLE I

TEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICTS COMPRISING UNIFIED  
DISTRICT NO. 473 WITH NUMBER OF TEACHERS  
AND ENROLLMENT AS OF SEPTEMBER 10, 1965\*

| District     | Number of Teachers | Enrollment |
|--------------|--------------------|------------|
| Chapman      | 34                 | 604        |
| Rural Center | 6                  | 109        |
| Navarre      | 5                  | 90         |
| Blue Ridge   | 5                  | 103        |
| Talmage      | 7                  | 96         |
| Upland       | 3                  | 50         |
| Carlton      | 3                  | 41         |
| Detroit      | 3                  | 30         |
| Manchester   | 3                  | 25         |
| Carry Creek  | 3                  | 23         |
| Total        | 72                 | 1,171      |

\*Source: County Superintendent's Reports, September, 1965.



## Importance of the Study

Research has shown that many changes have resulted in school districts that were unified or reorganized. In a study done by C. O. Fitzwater on 552 reorganized school districts located in eight states, the following changes emerged six years after reorganization. They are:

1. Around 85 per cent had consolidated school attendance units to some degree.
2. Except for schools above 900 in enrollment, most had consolidated all elementary schools into one or two six-grade elementary schools and had transferred grades seven and eight to the secondary organization.
3. Since reorganization, 73 districts, which had no kindergarten, initiated kindergarten programs.
4. Among the 152 districts that had kindergarten programs previous to reorganization, 41 expanded their kindergarten programs after reorganization.
5. Over half of the districts reported one or two courses had been added to the program of studies.
6. Almost 90 per cent were employing special service personnel on either a full-time or part-time basis.
7. Curriculum development and in-service education was initiated in 43 per cent of the districts since reorganization.
8. The building of new schools or remodeling of old buildings was reported in 72 per cent of the districts since reorganization.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>C. O. Fitzwater, Educational Change in Reorganized School Districts, U. S. Office of Education Bulletin 4 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1953), pp. 1-53.

On the basis of Fitzwater's report, one can conclude that many changes have occurred in the 552 districts studied. How much educational change will take place in the newly Unified School District No. 473 is in the realm of theory. Also, if educational change takes place, will it be somewhat like the changes that occurred in the districts studied by Fitzwater? However, it is possible to assume that some educational change will take place in Unified School District No. 473, especially if equal educational opportunities are to be provided for the students in the area.

At the time of the study, some of the characteristics of the schools in the newly unified district were as follows. Each district had one school building except Chapman. Chapman had two buildings. The Blue Ridge, Talmage, Navarre, Upland, Manchester, Rural Center, Detroit, and Carlton schools had similar administrative and instructional organization. They were similar in these aspects:

1. All the schools had a teaching principal.
2. All the schools had instruction arranged on a 1-8 plan.
3. All the schools had somewhat the same facilities, except Detroit and Upland which had no gymnasium.
4. None of the schools offered full-time kindergarten; Navarre and Talmage offered limited kindergarten instruction for six weeks.
5. All of the schools offered music instruction.



6. The program of studies for all of the schools consisted of the basic elementary subjects.
7. None of the schools, except Navarre and Talmage, had a text-book rental system in operation.
8. All of the teachers in these schools had the responsibility for either two or four grades. All of the schools used the self-contained classroom concept for instructional purposes. Talmage did some departmentalizing in the upper three grades, but it was a limited form of departmentalization.
9. None of the schools had the regular services of a school nurse, psychologist, speech therapist, guidance counselor, remedial reading expert, art instructor, or physical education instructor. At times under special circumstances, the schools employed the services of a speech therapist and psychologist in conjunction with Chapman High School, but this was on a temporary basis.
10. None of the schools had a program of any kind to care for mentally retarded students.
11. The salaries of the teachers in these schools were fairly equalized.

The other two elementary districts, Chapman and Carry Creek, were dissimilar in many respects in comparison to the eight schools that have just been discussed, particularly Chapman. Carry Creek provided for the instruction of grades 1-6 in a single building and sent its kindergarten and seventh and eighth grade pupils to the Chapman Elementary School.

The Chapman District school differed significantly

from the eight schools in the study area. The ways in which it differed were:

1. They had a full-time administrator.
2. Instruction was based on a 6-2 plan of organization. The self-contained classroom was utilized for grades K-6 and the departmentalized classroom was used for the instruction of the seventh and eighth grades.
3. In their K-6 organization, no teacher was responsible for more than a normal sized class consisting of one grade.
4. They had a central library. Only one school in the study area had a central library.
5. Kindergarten instruction was offered on a full-time basis.
6. The Chapman school had the services of a speech therapist, physical education instructor, and art instructor.
7. They offered a curriculum consisting of the basic subjects plus foreign languages, art, home economics, and industrial arts.
8. They had a text-book rental plan in operation.
9. The salaries of the teachers and administrator in the Chapman district were higher than those teachers and administrators in the study area.

Based on the data just presented, it is possible to conclude that there were differences in education opportunity for the students in Unified School District No. 473.

The administrators and the board of education of Unified School District No. 473 have had great educational responsibility placed upon them. They will have to make many

decisions that will affect both the students and patrons in the study area. They will need to determine what educational action should be taken in order to equalize educational opportunity as well as improve the quality of the children's education. In order to equalize the educational opportunities, it is fairly safe to assume that the schools in the study area will become more like the Chapman Elementary School than vice versa. If this does happen, there will be considerable organizational, administrative, and instructional change for the schools in the study area.

Whenever any type of educational change is imminent, it is worthwhile to know the feelings of the patrons toward certain ideas and programs related to these educational changes. Because the writer felt it was important for the administrators and board of education of Unified School District No. 473 to know the attitudes of the patrons in the study area toward their own schools and certain other educational ideas and programs, a questionnaire was developed for the explicit purpose of determining these attitudes. An attempt was made to determine the attitudes of the patrons toward their own schools as well as ideas and programs that might become a reality in the unified district. Also, an attempt was made to determine the attitudes of the patrons toward certain problems, such as transportation, that would accompany educational change in this area. It was anticipated by the writer that the results of the educational

survey might be of use for the administrators and board of education of Unified School District No. 473 in planning an educational program that would embrace three objectives:

1. Equalize educational opportunity in the unified district,
2. Ameliorate the entire educational program, 3. Plan an educational program harmonious with the concerns of most of the parents in the study area.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The purposes of this study were as follows:

1. To determine how the patrons evaluated their present elementary schools in terms of teacher salaries, building and equipment, instruction, and the program of studies for grades seven and eight.
2. To determine how the patrons felt about certain elementary educational programs, special services, and certain types of administrative and instructional organization that may come about in Unified School District No. 473.
3. To determine how the patrons felt about the maximum miles, one-way, that kindergarten pupils and seventh and eighth grade students should travel in attending school.



## STATEMENT OF QUESTIONS

1. How did the sampled patrons evaluate their present school building and equipment?
2. How did the sampled patrons evaluate the over-all instruction in their elementary schools?
3. How did the sampled patrons evaluate their present teacher's salaries?
4. Did the sampled patrons feel that the seventh and eighth graders in their school were or were not getting all the subjects necessary to successfully continue their education?
5. Did the sampled patrons favor kindergarten instruction?
6. How did the sampled patrons feel about the maximum miles, one-way, that a kindergarten child should have to travel in attending school?
7. How did the sampled patrons feel about the maximum miles, one-way, that a seventh or eighth grader should have to travel in attending school?
8. According to the sampled patrons, how much teaching duty should a principal have in a school with an enrollment between 75-125 pupils?
9. How did the sampled patrons feel about the number of grades a teacher should have with a normal class load in a self-contained classroom?

10. Did the sampled patrons prefer the departmentalized or the self-contained classroom for the instruction of seventh and eighth graders?
11. What elementary educational specialists did the sampled patrons feel should be available to an elementary school?
12. Did the sampled patrons favor a unified district having a program to care for mentally retarded children?
13. Did the sampled patrons favor a text-book rental plan for the schools of the unified district?
14. Did the sampled patrons favor or oppose seventh and eighth graders riding on the same bus as high school students in attending school?
15. What subjects did the sampled patrons feel should be available to a seventh and eighth grade student?

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

These terms are used throughout the report. They are defined for the sake of clarity and understanding in the reading of this report.

**Administrative Unit.** A geographic unit comprising all the area under a single system of school administration; generally constitutes a local taxing unit for school purposes.<sup>1</sup>

**Attendance Unit.** An administrative unit or subdivision of it consisting of the territory from which children legally may attend a given school building or school center.<sup>2</sup>

**Reorganized District.** A school district formed by the abolition of two or more districts and the combining of their territory into a single district. Attendance areas may or may not be changed.<sup>3</sup>

**Total Enrollment.** The entire number of pupils who have been on the roll at any time during the period for which total enrollment is being reported.<sup>4</sup>

**Common School District.** Districts governed by either three or five member school boards elected for three year terms by the voters of their district at an annual meeting in June. There are three categories of common school districts: those that operate one-teacher schools; those that operate two or more teacher elementary schools; and those that operate both an elementary and high school.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Carter V. Good, Dictionary of Education (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1959), p. 12.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 201.

<sup>5</sup>Comprehensive Educational Survey of Kansas, The Elementary and Secondary Education Study, Volume II (Topeka, Kansas: March, 1960), p. 123.

Rural High School District. Districts similar to common school districts in that their governing boards are likewise three or five member boards elected by voters at the annual meeting in June. A Rural High School may offer only grades nine through twelve. Rural high school and common school districts frequently overlap.<sup>1</sup>

Program of Studies. A complete list of the courses or subjects or classes offered by a school.<sup>2</sup>

Self-contained Classroom. The self-contained classroom, at the elementary school level, is a plan of organization in which one teacher works throughout the day with a given group of children. She may or may not be assisted from time to time by special teachers in such areas as art, music, physical education, science, and reading.<sup>3</sup>

Departmentalized Classroom. In its most extreme form departmentalization is a plan of organization in which each subject is taught to the children by a specialist in that particular subject.<sup>4</sup>

Patrons. A set of parents who have a child or children attending a school.

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<sup>1</sup>Comprehensive Educational Survey of Kansas, op. cit., p. 126.

<sup>2</sup>W. M. Alexander and J. G. Saylor, Modern Secondary Education (New York: Rinehart and Company, 1959), p. 311.

<sup>3</sup>James B. Burr and others, Elementary School Administration (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1963), p. 71.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 76.



## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

If the administrators and board of education in a school district hope to achieve true educational improvement, then they must always attempt to know the feelings and attitudes of the patrons toward their schools. Since it is the parents who own the schools, support the schools, and supply the children for the schools, it is only logical to conclude that their thinking should play a vital part in many aspects of the school's operation. Many educators feel that one of education's major problems in the future will be to get and maintain public support for the schools. This problem takes on even greater significance in view of the increasing amount of money that is needed for educational purposes. Public support is an absolute necessity.

One way in which public support may be achieved is to involve the parents in some of the problems of the school. The key to good schools is the involving of parents in the participatory process in a real and vital way. It is at this point that an opinion poll is very useful because it enables the school administrators to determine the people's educational concerns. Harold Hand has this to say:

The author is convinced that the principal value of the parent's inventory resides in its usefulness for precisely this purpose. Effective participation can begin only in connection with those considerations with which the parents are genuinely concerned. These genuine concerns of parents the school staff can reliably identify by using the parents inventory.



This instrument will also enable the teachers and the principal to discover how widespread each of such concerns is among the parent group.<sup>1</sup>

It is very important to include the parents in connection with the problem of appraising what the school is now doing and how it is doing it, and of planning what the school should be doing and how it is to do it. Educational progress is possible only on the basis of an informed public. The administrators of American schools are relying more and more on different techniques for measuring public opinion.

Interestingly enough, many of the schools in the past, especially in the 1920's and 1930's, were taught by a staff of the "teacher knows best" variety. Such a staff believed that the public was to be ignored in all really important respects, but was to be tolerated for appearances' sake on such occasions as parent's night, Education Week, and P.T.A. What the school should do and how it should do it were held to be almost exclusively the concern of the principal and teachers. In such school situations there was strong tendency to keep things very much as they were. In these types of school situations, the parents were never honestly and fully consulted in reference to proposed new developments or changed practices. Many times they were not informed until some time later.

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<sup>1</sup>Harold C. Hand, What People Think About Their Schools (New York: World Book Company, 1948), pp. 85-86.

Obviously the parents of these schools did not care for this kind of treatment, to say the least. They probably viewed change as capricious or arbitrary, or both. In schools of this type, maximum educational improvement certainly was not attained.

During the 1930's, a technique for measuring opinion emerged. It had a statistical basis differing from that of straw-vote techniques common earlier. Whereas the straw vote depended upon numbers to cancel out undue weighting of any one opinion, the emerging technique placed its reliance upon the balance or cross-sectional character of the populations sampled. The more recent technique holds as its basic assumption that the opinions expressed by an accurate cross-section sample of the population will be the same as that expressed by the entire population. Also it is a presently held view, that when there are not too many radically different groups in a population, it is possible to arrive at a representative sample by using random selection. In this method, each person in a population has an equal opportunity of being selected as a sample.

This method of measuring public opinion has become quite popular in recent years. Thousands of questionnaires have been sent to patrons of schools as well as people in education in order to measure opinion. It is not unreasonable to assume that when a questionnaire has been properly developed and is sent to a representative sample, that the

findings of this type of study will be useful to the school leaders and teachers in implanting goals and innovating changes that are commensurate with community objectives.

Moehlman and Van Zwoll have said this:

Accurate opinion measurement within any culture is of tremendous potential significance. In a democracy, the implications of the discovery, measurement, and utilization of public opinion reach to the very foundations of the concept, organization, and mode of operation of the society.<sup>1</sup>

The Denver, Colorado, school system conducts a survey of their schools every three years. The study starts out with the broad question asking what kind of job the Denver Public Schools are doing. After this the poll tries to pinpoint the areas of criticism. Other areas covered in the polls included instruction techniques, discipline, teacher qualifications, grading and promotion practices, extracurricular activities, teacher-pupil relations, personality development, the health program, the curriculum and athletics. The comments citizens made in these areas helped determine why they had given the school a good, fair, or poor rating. Since the Denver schools have instigated this program, there has been a decrease in complaints in certain areas indicating that the survey has been useful in letting educators know what phases of their program require special attention.

Many other school systems have also been able to

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<sup>1</sup>Arthur Moehlman and James Van Zwoll, School Public Relations (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts Inc., 1957), p. 36.

effectively use the opinion poll as a means for gathering the patron's opinion and thereby strengthening the school public relations program as well as the total school program. However, it appears that many school systems have been rather slow in using the technique of opinion polls as evidenced by Leslie Kindred's statement:

Despite the more extended use of public opinion polls in school systems, the increasing number of staff questionnaires, the sympathetic attitude of the press in publishing and interpreting school news, the process of checking the results in school public relations is still almost unexplored.<sup>1</sup>

With the increased emphasis on educational research both in the way of encouragement and the granting of money by the federal government, the opinion poll will probably be used more than ever.

Opinion polls also lend themselves well for studying the school curricula. In this way, the schools are able to find out how the people feel about various aspects of the curricula. In the whole area of curriculum development, it is essential that the feelings and attitudes of the school patrons are taken into consideration. The parents must understand the present curricula and their objectives as well as newly proposed curriculum changes. Proper curriculum development is not possible without some degree of parental participation. Ronald Doll says:

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<sup>1</sup>Leslie W. Kindred, How to Tell the School Story (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1960), p. 483.



The purpose of opinion polls is usually to discover agreement regarding strengths and weaknesses of school curricula. Polls have certain public relation values, and they may set the stage for curriculum improvement.<sup>1</sup>

Grieder, Pierce, and Rosenstengel have said this:

The techniques of opinion-polling referred to several times in these last two chapters are probably the best available methods for getting the reactions of the general public, teachers, and pupils. A comprehensive evaluation should include data from a representative community-wide poll if possible.<sup>2</sup>

It has been established that it is important to know the opinions of the patrons of a school system and that the use of the opinion poll is a good method for obtaining data. However, it should be understood that the opinion poll can have serious weaknesses if it is not carried out properly. One of the best examples of errors in polling is the Literary Digest poll of the Landon-Roosevelt election of 1936. Although Roosevelt won by a landslide, capturing every state except two, the Digest predicted that Landon would win. The mistakes made would probably not be made today, since researchers have learned from mistakes in the past. For one thing, the sampling was poorly conceived. Many of the names selected were taken from telephone directories and automobile owners. Since this was a time of depression, it turned out

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<sup>1</sup>Ronald Doll, Curriculum Development: Decision-Making and Process (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1964), p. 294.

<sup>2</sup>Calvin Grieder and others, Public School Administration (New York: Ronald Press Company, 1961), p. 619.



that the sampled people were mostly from higher socio-economic levels who owned cars and telephones. At this particular time, the main Republican support came from the upper half of the social classes. Thus a great percentage of those polled were Republican voters. Although other mistakes were also made by the Digest, this was essentially the greatest error of the polling procedure.

Another major polling error was made more recently in the presidential survey of 1948 which indicated that Dewey would win the election. The errors were not as great in this poll as in the one in 1936, but it too shows there are hazards in polling. However, in today's world, researchers have improved polling procedures prodigiously and in most cases, reliable and valid information is obtained.

The risks that a school system undertakes in determining public opinion by polling do not justify excluding this method as a part of educational research. Arthur Rice makes this statement concerning the importance of public participation.

The coming crisis in public schools will not be the curriculum or shortage of teachers or classrooms. It will not be the problem of teacher's salaries as so many think. The crisis will be our ability to gain citizen support of the kind of education essential in our form of society.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Arthur Rice's statement, cited by James Shaner, "P-R-Geared to More Than Good Intentions," Minnesota Journal of Education, 44:19, March, 1964.

Previously in this review, an allusion was made to the effect that before a school can get its patrons to participate in its operation, it must know something of the feelings, attitudes, and concerns of the patrons. This leads to the conclusion that since opinion polling (although it has weaknesses) can bring a school useful data, a school should seriously consider this as a means of ameliorating the instructional process.

We have called attention to the difficulties inherent in surveying the attitudes of parents, but have demonstrated that even with its limitations the systematic survey affords the school far more in the way of valid and reliable information than it now has to go on.<sup>1</sup>

If the school leaders and board of education endeavor to determine the thoughts and attitudes of the people toward the schools, the school is that much more assured of gaining the understanding of confidence of the community--something which educators realize is of the utmost importance in attaining a successful school operation in order that the youth of our country may ultimately be positive contributors to our society.

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<sup>1</sup>Hand, op. cit., pp. 81-82.

## METHODS AND PROCEDURES

In order to develop the educational questionnaire and complete the educational survey, the following data were collected.

1. Information concerning the objectives of school reorganization.
2. Information relative to the 1965 Kansas School Unification Act and its implications for the schools in the study area.
3. Educational history of the area comprising the Unified District No. 473.
4. The administrative and instructional organization as well as the present and projected enrollments of the schools in the study area.
5. The total number of parents who have children in one of the schools in the study area. It was found that there are 290 sets of parents in the entire study area.
6. The names and addresses of all the parents of first, third, sixth, and seventh graders in the schools located in the study area.
7. The attitude of the sampled patrons toward certain elementary educational programs, special services, and certain types of administrative and instructional organization that may come about in Unified School District No. 473.
8. The attitude of the sampled patrons toward their present elementary schools in terms of teacher salaries, buildings, equipment, instruction, and the program of studies for the seventh and eighth grades.
9. The attitude of the sampled patrons toward the maximum miles, one-way, that a kindergarten or seventh and eighth grader should travel in attending school.

The sources for the data indicated above were:

1. Records of the Dickinson County Superintendent of Schools.
2. Sampled patrons of the study area.
3. Textbooks and periodicals in the Kansas State University library.
4. Bulletins from the Kansas State Department of Education.
5. Board members and administrators of Unified District No. 473.

In developing the questionnaire, it was decided to send questionnaires to approximately 50 per cent of the total 290 sets of parents in the study area. After consultation with the Dickinson County Superintendent of Schools, Assistant Superintendent of Unified School District No. 473, and certain school board members, it was decided by the writer to use parents of first, third, sixth, and seventh graders. This was done because it was felt that these parents would be able to provide the best responses to the questionnaire. However, it should be pointed out that many of these parents also had children in the second, fourth, fifth, and eighth grades. Consequently, the parents of first, third, sixth, and seventh graders actually constituted more than 50 per cent of the total parents.

There were further reasons why parents of first, third, sixth, and seventh graders were used. First grade parents were used to find out some attitudes toward kindergarten. Third grade parents were used because a grade was wanted between the first and sixth. Sixth and seventh grade



parents were used to determine attitudes toward junior high curricula and instructional organization as well as problems of transportation. The writer felt that sixth and seventh grade parents would be more sensitive to problems concerned with junior high than eighth grade parents whose children would be going to high school the following year. As has been indicated, the writer was assisted in these decisions by the County Superintendent of Schools, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction, and certain school board members of Unified District No. 473.

The procedure used in selecting parents was as follows: an alphabetized list of names of parents of all first, third, sixth, and seventh graders for each school was gathered. Enough parents were chosen from each school's lists so as to account for half of the parents of that school district. The way in which certain parents were actually selected can probably be best described by example. In the case of the Blue Ridge school district which had a total of 51 sets of parents, it was decided to select 26 sets of parents for sampling. This was approximately 50 per cent of its total parents. In order to get a fairly even distribution of parents for each grade, the following number was chosen from each grade's parents: first-6, third-6, sixth-7, and seventh-7. The method used in getting these parents from each grade list was to take the first name of the alphabetized list and then take every other one until the desired



amount had been secured. If the same parents happened to be chosen again on another list, they were omitted and the parents immediately following were selected, and then every other one again. This same procedure was used for all of the schools in the study area and resulted in 145 sets of parents or 50 per cent of the total parents being selected as samples. The writer felt that this resulted in the selection of a representative sample.

Of the questionnaires sent out, 79 per cent were returned in completed form. Table II on page 27 shows the total number of parents, the number of parents sampled, and the percentage of returns in each school district. No follow-up letter was used. However, the Carlton and Manchester districts required a few phone calls to get a feasible percentage of returns. All of the subjects were residing in the district from which they were selected at the time of the study.

Some limitations of the study were:

1. Subjects were taken only from parents of first, third, sixth, and seventh grade students.
2. The part of the questionnaire relating to the patron's evaluation of their present elementary schools was limited to attitudes concerning teacher's salaries, instruction, buildings, equipment, and the program of studies for seventh and eighth graders.
3. The study did not attempt to determine the patron's attitudes toward all possible educational changes that might come

TABLE II

TOTAL NUMBER OF PARENTS, THE NUMBER OF PARENTS  
SAMPLED, AND THE PERCENTAGE OF RETURNS IN  
EACH SCHOOL DISTRICT IN STUDY AREA, 1965

| School District | Total Parents | Number Sampled | Per Cent of Return |
|-----------------|---------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Rural Center    | 52            | 26             | 77                 |
| Navarre         | 53            | 26             | 77                 |
| Blue Ridge      | 51            | 26             | 85                 |
| Talmage         | 51            | 25             | 72                 |
| Upland          | 30            | 15             | 73                 |
| Carlton         | 24            | 12             | 83                 |
| Detroit         | 15            | 8              | 88                 |
| Manchester      | 14            | 7              | 71                 |
| Total           | 290           | 145            | 79                 |

in their area.

4. Two districts of Unified School District No. 473 were excluded from the study.
5. No attempt was made to introduce explanatory variables with which to account for the attitudes expressed by the patrons.

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

Based on a return of 79 per cent of the 145 questionnaires sent to one-half of the patrons in the study area, the following findings emerged, and for the most part, are presented in tabular form. The percentages that appear in the tables have been rounded off to the nearest whole per cent and are based on the 79 per cent of the sampled patrons who responded on the questionnaire. The questionnaires were sent out in December of 1965. The description of the findings will be arranged according to the Statement of Questions found on page 11 of this report.

How did the sampled patrons evaluate their present school building and equipment? Table III on page 30 shows these results. The percentage of sampled patrons who evaluated their school building and equipment as excellent was 31 per cent. The Blue Ridge School had the highest percentage of patrons rating it as excellent; this is in part due to the fact that the building was recently constructed in 1960. Most of the sampled patrons (48 per cent) in the study area rated their school building and equipment as good. A fair rating was given by 18 per cent and a poor rating by 4 per cent. The Upland and Detroit schools received the most unfavorable ratings with 63 and 57 per cent, respectively, of its patrons rating the school building and equipment either fair or poor.

TABLE III

PERCENTAGE OF SAMPLED PATRONS IN UNIFIED DISTRICT  
NO. 473 WHO EVALUATED THEIR PRESENT ELEMENTARY  
SCHOOL BUILDING AND EQUIPMENT EXCELLENT,  
GOOD, FAIR, AND POOR

| School       | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | No Opinion |
|--------------|-----------|------|------|------|------------|
| Blue Ridge   | 64        | 27   | 9    | 0    | 0          |
| Talmage      | 11        | 72   | 17   | 0    | 0          |
| Rural Center | 40        | 60   | 0    | 0    | 0          |
| Navarre      | 30        | 50   | 20   | 0    | 0          |
| Upland       | 9         | 36   | 45   | 18   | 0          |
| Carlton      | 60        | 30   | 10   | 0    | 0          |
| Manchester   | 20        | 80   | 0    | 0    | 0          |
| Detroit      | 14        | 29   | 43   | 14   | 0          |
| All patrons  | 31        | 48   | 18   | 4    | 0          |



Table IV on page 32 shows the characteristics of the school buildings in use by the districts studied. Five of the eight schools have either been built or had additions put on them in the last ten years. The seating capacity, at the time of the study, was not being taxed in any of the schools. The only school that has had a major physical change in the last three years was Rural Center. In 1964, they purchased a mobile-unit classroom for utilization by their upper grade students.

A disadvantage for most of the schools, except Talmage, was that they had no library rooms. None of the schools had an art room; however, they all had all-purpose rooms. Detroit, Manchester, and Upland were the only schools not having a gymnasium. All of the schools are constructed of brick.

How did the sampled patrons evaluate the over-all instruction in their elementary schools? Table V on page 33 shows these results. The evaluation of the sampled patrons for this was: excellent-20 per cent, good-52 per cent, fair-24 per cent, poor-0 per cent, and no opinion-4 per cent. Somewhat of a surprise to the writer was the fact that not one of the returned questionnaires indicated a poor evaluation of the over-all instruction. The "error of central

TABLE IV

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL BUILDINGS IN USE BY  
THE DISTRICTS STUDIED\*

| School          | :<br>: Date            | Construction<br>: Material | :<br>: Class:Rooms | :<br>: Size:Acres | :<br>: Seat-<br>: ing:Room | :<br>: Heat:Water | :<br>: Art:Music:Room | :<br>: Lunch:Room | :<br>: All:Li-<br>: brary:Room |
|-----------------|------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| Blue Ridge      | 1960                   | Brick                      | 4                  | 6                 | 100 gas                    | well              | no                    | yes               | no                             |
| Talmage         | 1929                   | Brick                      | 5                  | 7                 | 125 coal                   | well              | no                    | yes               | yes                            |
| Rural<br>Center | 1951,<br>1956          | Brick                      | 5                  | 5                 | 100 gas                    | well              | no                    | yes               | no                             |
| Navarre         | 1930,<br>1950,<br>1960 | Brick                      | 4                  | 2                 | 100 gas                    | well              | no                    | yes               | no                             |
| Upland          | 1959                   | Brick                      | 2                  | 5                 | 50 gas                     | well              | no                    | yes               | no                             |
| Carlton         | 1956                   | Brick                      | 3                  | 5                 | 55 gas                     | well              | no                    | yes               | no                             |
| Manchester      | 1920,<br>1937          | Brick                      | 2                  | 2                 | 50 gas                     | city              | no                    | yes               | no                             |
| Detroit         | 1907                   | Brick                      | 2                  | 3                 | 50 coal                    | well              | no                    | yes               | no                             |

\*Source: Kenneth R. Root, "A Study of the Organization of School Districts Served by the Dickinson County Community High School" (unpublished Master's Report, Kansas State University, Manhattan, 1963), p. 31.

Note: The characteristics of these school buildings were the same as of December, 1965.

TABLE V

PERCENTAGE OF SAMPLED PATRONS IN UNIFIED DISTRICT NO.  
473 WHO EVALUATED THEIR PRESENT OVER-ALL INSTRUCTION  
AS EXCELLENT, GOOD, FAIR, AND POOR

| School       | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | No Opinion |
|--------------|-----------|------|------|------|------------|
| Blue Ridge   | 18        | 50   | 23   | 0    | 9          |
| Talmage      | 17        | 50   | 28   | 0    | 6          |
| Rural Center | 5         | 75   | 20   | 0    | 0          |
| Navarre      | 20        | 65   | 10   | 0    | 5          |
| Upland       | 18        | 36   | 45   | 0    | 0          |
| Carlton      | 40        | 30   | 30   | 0    | 0          |
| Manchester   | 0         | 80   | 20   | 0    | 0          |
| Detroit      | 43        | 29   | 14   | 0    | 14         |
| All patrons  | 20        | 52   | 24   | 0    | 4          |

tendency" might have been operating with this question.<sup>1</sup>

How did the sampled patrons evaluate their present teacher's salaries? Table VI on page 35 shows the results. Approximately 79 per cent of the sampled patrons felt that the salaries their teachers were getting were about right; 5 per cent felt they were too high and 6 per cent felt they were too low. No opinion was expressed by 10 per cent of the sampled patrons. At the time of the study, the average salaries for principals in the study area was \$5,700, and for teachers it was \$5,000.<sup>2</sup>

The sampled patrons of the Navarre district had 35 per cent expressing no opinion on the question related to teacher's salaries. This percentage was high in comparison to the other districts. Many of the sampled patrons who expressed no opinion on this question indicated that they did not know the amount of money their teachers were getting.

Did the sampled patrons feel that the seventh and eighth graders in their school were or were not getting all the subjects necessary to successfully continue their education? Table VII on page 36 shows these results. Yes was given as a response by 72 per cent of all patrons; no was checked by 26 per cent and 2 per cent expressed no opinion.

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<sup>1</sup>"Error of central tendency" is the tendency for people to evaluate persons as average rather than excellent or bad.

<sup>2</sup>Dickinson County Educational Directory, 1965-1966.

TABLE VI

PERCENTAGE OF SAMPLED PATRONS IN UNIFIED DISTRICT  
NO. 473 WHO FELT THEIR TEACHER'S SALARIES  
WERE ABOUT RIGHT, TOO HIGH, OR TOO LOW

| School       | About Right | Too High | Too Low | No Opinion |
|--------------|-------------|----------|---------|------------|
| Blue Ridge   | 73          | 5        | 9       | 13         |
| Talmage      | 83          | 0        | 17      | 0          |
| Rural Center | 80          | 15       | 0       | 5          |
| Navarre      | 50          | 5        | 10      | 35         |
| Upland       | 73          | 0        | 13      | 14         |
| Carlton      | 100         | 0        | 0       | 0          |
| Manchester   | 86          | 14       | 0       | 0          |
| Detroit      | 90          | 0        | 0       | 10         |
| All patrons  | 79          | 5        | 6       | 10         |



TABLE VII

PERCENTAGE OF THE SAMPLED PATRONS IN UNIFIED DISTRICT  
NO. 473 WHO FELT THE SEVENTH AND EIGHTH GRADES IN  
THEIR SCHOOL WERE OR WERE NOT GETTING ALL THE  
SUBJECTS NECESSARY TO SUCCESSFULLY CONTINUE  
THEIR EDUCATION

| School       | Yes | No | No Opinion |
|--------------|-----|----|------------|
| Blue Ridge   | 86  | 14 | 0          |
| Talmage      | 50  | 50 | 0          |
| Rural Center | 75  | 20 | 5          |
| Navarre      | 55  | 35 | 10         |
| Upland       | 64  | 36 | 0          |
| Carlton      | 90  | 10 | 0          |
| Manchester   | 100 | 0  | 0          |
| Detroit      | 57  | 43 | 0          |
| All patrons  | 72  | 26 | 2          |

Four school districts had a considerably higher percentage expressing a no response. The schools and per cents were: Talmage-50, Navarre-35, Upland-36, and Detroit-43. At the time of the study, all the schools were offering the same subjects to their seventh and eighth graders. The subjects offered were: English, history, social studies, mathematics, civics, spelling, science, reading, health, art, and physical education. No special teachers were employed for teaching art and physical education.

Did the sampled patrons favor kindergarten instruction? Table VIII on page 38 shows these findings. The results for all patrons were: 81 per cent in favor, 18 per cent opposed, and 1 per cent expressed no opinion. Only one school district did not have a large majority in favor of kindergarten instruction and that was the Detroit district, which had 57 per cent in favor and 43 per cent opposed. Many of the sampled patrons who indicated they were in favor of kindergarten qualified their answer by stating they wanted it for a half day only. At the time of the study, Talmage and Navarre, were offering limited kindergarten instruction for six weeks during the school year.

How did the sampled patrons feel about the maximum miles, one-way, that a kindergarten child should have to travel in attending school? Table IX on page 39 shows the findings. Of those who returned questionnaires, 91 per cent expressed an opinion. The percentage of all patrons who felt

TABLE VIII  
THE PERCENTAGE OF SAMPLED PATRONS IN UNIFIED  
DISTRICT NO. 473 WHO FAVORED OR OPPOSED  
KINDERGARTEN INSTRUCTION

| School       | In Favor | Opposed | No Opinion |
|--------------|----------|---------|------------|
| Blue Ridge   | 73       | 27      | 0          |
| Talmage      | 90       | 10      | 0          |
| Rural Center | 70       | 30      | 0          |
| Navarre      | 95       | 5       | 0          |
| Upland       | 87       | 13      | 0          |
| Carlton      | 90       | 0       | 10         |
| Manchester   | 80       | 20      | 0          |
| Detroit      | 57       | 43      | 0          |
| All patrons  | 81       | 18      | 1          |

TABLE IX

PERCENTAGE OF SAMPLED PATRONS IN UNIFIED DISTRICT  
NO. 473 WHO FELT THE FOLLOWING DISTANCES  
SHOULD BE THE MAXIMUM MILES, ONE-WAY,  
FOR A KINDERGARTEN CHILD TO HAVE  
TO TRAVEL IN ATTENDING SCHOOL

| Miles      | Percentage |
|------------|------------|
| 1 - 3      | 4          |
| 4 - 6      | 19         |
| 7 - 9      | 15         |
| 10 - 12    | 49         |
| 13 - 15    | 4          |
| 16 - 18    | 0          |
| 19 - 21    | 1          |
| No opinion | 9          |

the maximum distance, one-way, should be between 10-12 miles was 49 per cent. Only 5 per cent felt this distance should be over 12 miles. The mode for the maximum miles indicated by the sampled patrons was 10.

How did the sampled patrons feel about the maximum miles, one-way, that a seventh and eighth grader should have to travel in attending school? Table X on page 41 shows these results. Of all sampled patrons, 97 per cent expressed an opinion on this question. Only 11 per cent felt the distance should be over 21 miles. Selecting a distance somewhere between 10 through 21 miles were 74 per cent. The percentage who selected a distance between 1 and 9 miles was 12 per cent. The mode for the maximum miles was 15.

According to the sampled patrons, how much teaching duty should a principal have in a school with an enrollment between 75-125 students? Table XI on page 42 shows the feelings of the patrons toward this. The percentages were as follows: those favoring a principal having full-time teaching duty-35 per cent, part-time teaching duty-60 per cent, and no-teaching duty-1 per cent. The percentage expressing no opinion was 4 per cent. At the time of the study, the status of the schools in respect to the amount of teaching duty required by the principal was like this. The Talmage school had the only principal who had part-time teaching duty. Apparently, Talmage's patrons favor this as evidenced by the fact that 90 per cent of their sampled patrons from



TABLE X

PERCENTAGE OF SAMPLED PATRONS IN UNIFIED DISTRICT NO.  
473 WHO FELT THE FOLLOWING DISTANCES SHOULD BE THE  
MAXIMUM DISTANCE, ONE-WAY, FOR A SEVENTH OR EIGHTH  
GRADER TO HAVE TO TRAVEL IN ATTENDING SCHOOL

| Miles      | Percentage |
|------------|------------|
| 1 - 3      | 2          |
| 4 - 6      | 5          |
| 7 - 9      | 5          |
| 10 - 12    | 26         |
| 13 - 15    | 34         |
| 16 - 18    | 0          |
| 19 - 21    | 14         |
| 22 - 24    | 0          |
| 25 - 27    | 4          |
| 28 - 30    | 5          |
| 31 - 33    | 0          |
| 34 - 36    | 0          |
| 37 - 39    | 0          |
| 40 - 42    | 2          |
| No opinion | 3          |

TABLE XI

PERCENTAGE OF SAMPLED PATRONS IN UNIFIED DISTRICT NO.  
 473 WHO FAVORED A FULL-TIME, PART-TIME, OR NO  
 TEACHING PRINCIPAL IN AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
 WITH AN ENROLLMENT BETWEEN 75-125 PUPILS

| School       | Full-Time | Part-Time | No-Teaching | No Opinion |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|------------|
| Blue Ridge   | 50        | 41        | 5           | 4          |
| Talmage      | 10        | 90        | 0           | 0          |
| Rural Center | 70        | 30        | 0           | 0          |
| Navarre      | 40        | 45        | 0           | 15         |
| Upland       | 36        | 64        | 0           | 0          |
| Carlton      | 0         | 90        | 0           | 10         |
| Manchester   | 20        | 80        | 0           | 0          |
| Detroit      | 57        | 43        | 0           | 0          |
| All patrons  | 35        | 60        | 1           | 4          |

this district indicated they were in favor of the principal having only part-time teaching duty.

In the Blue Ridge, Rural Center, and Navarre schools the principal also had the responsibility of teaching two grades. In the Carlton, Manchester, Detroit, and Upland schools, the principal had the responsibility of teaching four grades.

How did the sampled patrons feel about the number of grades an elementary teacher should have with a normal class load in a self-contained classroom? Table XII on page 44 shows the responses of the patrons. Of the responding patrons, 48 per cent indicated one grade, 39 per cent indicated two grades, and 7 per cent indicated three or more grades. No opinion was expressed by 6 per cent of the patrons.

At the time of the study, none of the schools in the study area were using one grade per teacher. The teachers of Blue Ridge, Navarre, Talmage, and Rural Center had two grades. The Carlton, Manchester, Detroit, and Upland teachers had four grades. The enrollments for the schools in the study area were given in Table I on page 3.

Did the sampled patrons prefer the departmentalized or the self-contained classroom for the instruction of seventh and eighth graders. Table XIII on page 45 shows how the patrons felt. Of the responding sampled patrons, 59 per cent were in favor of the departmentalized classroom and 41 per cent were in favor of the self-contained classroom. All

TABLE XII

PERCENTAGE OF SAMPLED PATRONS IN UNIFIED DISTRICT NO. 473  
WHO FELT AN ELEMENTARY TEACHER WITH A NORMAL CLASS LOAD  
IN A SELF-CONTAINED CLASSROOM SHOULD HAVE ONE  
GRADE, TWO GRADES, OR THREE OR MORE GRADES

| School       | One Grade | Two Grades | Three Or More<br>Grades | No Opinion |
|--------------|-----------|------------|-------------------------|------------|
| Blue Ridge   | 41        | 50         | 4                       | 5          |
| Talmage      | 83        | 10         | 0                       | 7          |
| Rural Center | 45        | 50         | 0                       | 5          |
| Navarre      | 70        | 25         | 0                       | 5          |
| Upland       | 36        | 51         | 0                       | 13         |
| Carlton      | 20        | 50         | 20                      | 10         |
| Manchester   | 60        | 20         | 20                      | 0          |
| Detroit      | 27        | 59         | 14                      | 0          |
| All patrons  | 48        | 39         | 7                       | 6          |

TABLE XIII

PERCENTAGE OF SAMPLED PATRONS IN UNIFIED DISTRICT  
NO. 473 WHO PREFERRED DEPARTMENTALIZED OR SELF-  
CONTAINED CLASSROOMS FOR GRADES SEVEN AND EIGHT

| School       | Departmentalized<br>Classroom | Self-Contained<br>Classroom | No Opinion |
|--------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|
| Blue Ridge   | 23                            | 77                          | 0          |
| Talmage      | 89                            | 11                          | 0          |
| Rural Center | 45                            | 55                          | 0          |
| Navarre      | 65                            | 35                          | 0          |
| Upland       | 82                            | 18                          | 0          |
| Carlton      | 73                            | 27                          | 0          |
| Manchester   | 20                            | 80                          | 0          |
| Detroit      | 71                            | 29                          | 0          |
| All patrons  | 59                            | 41                          | 0          |



of the responding sampled patrons expressed an opinion on this question. When the study was made, Talmage was the only school that had a form of departmentalization for the upper grades. Two upper grade teachers were assuming responsibility for all the subjects. Each was responsible for one-half of the subjects taught to the upper graders. Talmage also had the greatest percentage of patrons favoring departmentalization for seventh and eighth graders. Blue Ridge and Manchester were lowest in the percentage that favored departmentalization, with 23 and 20 per cent, respectively.

What elementary educational specialists did the sampled patrons feel should be available to an elementary school? Table XIV on page 47 shows findings. The specialists and the percentage of sampled patrons who felt they should be available are:

|                       |                                   |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| speech therapist ..52 | guidance counselor.....10         |
| music instructor ..96 | physical education instructor..41 |
| psychologist .....12  | school nurse .....42              |
| art instructor ....21 | remedial reading instructor...61  |

Less than one per cent of the sampled patrons felt that none of the specialists should be available to an elementary school. The greatest emphasis on the part of the patrons was placed on music and remedial reading. At the time of the study, all of the schools in the study area had the services of a music instructor; however, none of the schools had the consistent services of any of the other educational specialists indicated previously. None of the responding sampled patrons failed to

TABLE XIV

PERCENTAGE OF SAMPLED PATRONS IN UNIFIED DISTRICT NO. 473 WHO FELT THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTARY EDUCATIONAL SPECIALISTS SHOULD BE AVAILABLE TO AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

| School       | Speech<br>Therapist | Music<br>Instructor | Psychologist | Art<br>Instructor | Guidance<br>Counselor | Physical<br>Education<br>Instructor | School<br>Nurse | Remedial<br>Reading<br>Instructor | None* |
|--------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|-------|
| Blue Ridge   | 64                  | 73                  | 5            | 23                | 14                    | 45                                  | 32              | 59                                | 0     |
| Talmage      | 78                  | 94                  | 28           | 39                | 6                     | 39                                  | 39              | 78                                | 6     |
| Rural Center | 35                  | 85                  | 5            | 5                 | 5                     | 40                                  | 10              | 90                                | 0     |
| Navarre      | 70                  | 80                  | 25           | 5                 | 25                    | 25                                  | 45              | 65                                | 5     |
| Upland       | 64                  | 100                 | 0            | 45                | 27                    | 64                                  | 45              | 55                                | 0     |
| Carlton      | 40                  | 80                  | 10           | 40                | 0                     | 30                                  | 30              | 30                                | 0     |
| Manchester   | 20                  | 100                 | 0            | 0                 | 0                     | 40                                  | 60              | 80                                | 0     |
| Detroit      | 43                  | 86                  | 14           | 0                 | 0                     | 43                                  | 71              | 29                                | 0     |
| All patrons  | 52                  | 96                  | 12           | 21                | 10                    | 41                                  | 42              | 61                                | 1     |

\*Percentage of sampled patrons who felt none of the specialists should be available to an elementary school.

express an opinion on this question.

Did the sampled patrons favor a unified district having a program to care for mentally retarded children? Table XV on page 49 shows these findings. The percentage of sampled patrons in favor of such a program was 74 per cent; 22 per cent were opposed and 4 per cent had no opinion. These results were surprising in view of the fact that none of the schools had any kind of plan for handling mentally retarded children. If there was a mentally retarded child in the school, he was put in with the rest of the students. Rural Center was the only school who had more patrons opposing than favoring such a plan. The Blue Ridge and Manchester patrons were strongly in favor of such a plan.

Did the sampled patrons favor a text-book rental plan for the schools of the unified district? Table XVI on page 50 shows how the patrons felt. The percentage for it was rather great in that 95 per cent were in favor of a text-book rental plan. Those opposed to it made up 5 per cent of the sampled patrons. All the sampled patrons responded to this question. Talmage and Navarre were the only two schools, at the time of the study, using a text-book rental plan. The sampled patrons of every school were strongly in favor of such a plan. Many of the respondents expressed additional feelings on this question to the effect that they were very much in favor of such a plan.

Did the sampled patrons favor or oppose seventh and

TABLE XV

PERCENTAGE OF SAMPLED PATRONS IN UNIFIED DISTRICT NO. 473  
WHO FAVORED OR OPPOSED A UNIFIED DISTRICT HAVING  
A PROGRAM FOR MENTALLY RETARDED CHILDREN

| School       | In Favor | Opposed | No Opinion |
|--------------|----------|---------|------------|
| Blue Ridge   | 95       | 5       | 0          |
| Talmage      | 77       | 17      | 6          |
| Rural Center | 30       | 65      | 5          |
| Navarre      | 85       | 10      | 5          |
| Upland       | 82       | 18      | 0          |
| Carlton      | 80       | 20      | 0          |
| Manchester   | 100      | 0       | 0          |
| Detroit      | 43       | 43      | 14         |
| All patrons  | 74       | 22      | 4          |

TABLE XVI

PERCENTAGE OF SAMPLED PATRONS IN UNIFIED DISTRICT NO.  
473 WHO FAVORED OR OPPOSED A TEXT BOOK  
RENTAL SYSTEM FOR A UNIFIED DISTRICT

| School       | In Favor | Opposed | No Opinion |
|--------------|----------|---------|------------|
| Blue Ridge   | 100      | 0       | 0          |
| Talmage      | 90       | 10      | 0          |
| Rural Center | 95       | 5       | 0          |
| Navarre      | 100      | 0       | 0          |
| Upland       | 100      | 0       | 0          |
| Carlton      | 70       | 30      | 0          |
| Manchester   | 100      | 0       | 0          |
| Detroit      | 100      | 0       | 0          |
| All patrons  | 95       | 5       | 0          |



eighth graders riding on the same bus as high school students in attending school? Table XVII on page 52 shows these results. The sampled patrons were divided on this question with 45 per cent in favor and 52 per cent opposed. No opinion was indicated by 3 per cent of the sampled patrons. At the time of the study, none of the seventh and eighth grade pupils in the study area rode on the same bus with high school students in attending school.

What subjects did the sampled patrons feel should be available to a seventh and eighth grade student? Table XVIII on page 53 shows these results. The subjects and percentage who felt they should be available are:

|                       |    |                       |    |
|-----------------------|----|-----------------------|----|
| woodwork .....        | 27 | music .....           | 94 |
| industrial arts ..... | 33 | physical education .. | 71 |
| home economics .....  | 35 | art .....             | 42 |
| foreign language .... | 29 |                       |    |

Only two per cent felt none should be available and all these respondents came from the Upland district.

The conclusion that can be drawn is that the sampled patrons did not feel too strongly about subjects that were not already being offered to their students. The subjects that were being offered were music, physical education, and art. These were taught by the self-contained classroom teacher. Although art was being taught at the time of the study, only 42 per cent felt it should be available to seventh and eighth graders.

A delight to the writer in examining the returned

TABLE XVII

PERCENTAGE OF SAMPLED PATRONS IN UNIFIED DISTRICT NO. 473  
WHO FAVORED OR OPPOSED SEVENTH AND EIGHTH GRADERS  
RIDING ON THE SAME BUS AS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

| School       | In Favor | Opposed | No Opinion |
|--------------|----------|---------|------------|
| Blue Ridge   | 45       | 55      | 0          |
| Talmage      | 39       | 61      | 0          |
| Rural Center | 50       | 50      | 0          |
| Navarre      | 35       | 65      | 0          |
| Upland       | 55       | 45      | 0          |
| Carlton      | 70       | 30      | 0          |
| Manchester   | 40       | 40      | 20         |
| Detroit      | 29       | 71      | 0          |
| All patrons  | 45       | 52      | 3          |

TABLE XVIII

PERCENTAGE OF SAMPLED PATRONS IN UNIFIED DISTRICT NO. 473 WHO  
FELT THE FOLLOWING SUBJECTS SHOULD BE AVAILABLE TO SEVENTH  
AND EIGHTH GRADE STUDENTS

| School       | Wood<br>Work | Industrial<br>Arts | Home<br>Economics | Foreign<br>Languages | Music | Physical<br>Education | Art | None<br>** |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|-------------------|----------------------|-------|-----------------------|-----|------------|
| Blue Ridge   | 14           | 14                 | 23                | 23                   | 94    | 74                    | 32  | 0          |
| Talmage      | 38           | 38                 | 38                | 60                   | 90    | 94                    | 39  | 0          |
| Rural Center | 10           | 5                  | 20                | 20                   | 90    | 80                    | 25  | 0          |
| Navarre      | 30           | 30                 | 45                | 65                   | 80    | 75                    | 45  | 0          |
| Upland       | 36           | 45                 | 55                | 14                   | 90    | 73                    | 73  | 13         |
| Carlton      | 30           | 20                 | 50                | 10                   | 90    | 70                    | 50  | 0          |
| Manchester   | 40           | 20                 | 20                | 0                    | 80    | 60                    | 40  | 0          |
| Detroit      | 14           | 14                 | 29                | 43                   | 86    | 43                    | 29  | 0          |
| All patrons  | 27           | 23                 | 35                | 29                   | 88    | 71                    | 42  | 2          |

\*Percentage of sampled patrons who felt none of the subjects needed to be available to a seventh or eighth grade student.

questionnaires was reading the additional comments stated by many of the sampled patrons. In general, the sampled patrons seemed concerned and interested in their schools and their children's education.

## SUMMARY

The purpose of the study was:

1. To determine how the sampled patrons evaluated their present elementary schools in terms of teacher salaries, building and equipment, instruction, and the program of studies for grades seven and eight.
2. To determine how the sampled patrons felt about certain elementary educational programs, special services, and certain types of administrative and instructional organization that may come about in Unified School District No. 473.
3. To determine how the sampled patrons felt about the maximum miles, one-way, that kindergarten pupils and seventh and eighth grade students should travel in attending school.

In order to determine the attitudes and concerns of the patrons in the study area, a questionnaire was developed and sent to approximately one-half of the total elementary school patrons in the study area. The study area consisted of eight former elementary school districts that now comprise most of the Unified School District No. 473. Based on a return of 79 per cent of 145 questionnaires that were sent to



patrons representative of the study area, the following findings emerged as answers to the Statement of Questions.

1. How did the sampled patrons evaluate their present elementary school building and equipment? The evaluations were: excellent-31 per cent, good-48 per cent, fair-18 per cent, poor-4 per cent, and no opinion-0 per cent.
2. How did the sampled patrons evaluate the overall instruction in their schools? The evaluations were: excellent-20 per cent, good-52 per cent, fair-24 per cent, poor-0 per cent, and no opinion-4 per cent.
3. How did the sampled patrons evaluate their present teacher's salaries? The evaluations were: about right-79 per cent, too high-5 per cent, too low-6 per cent, and no opinion-10 per cent.
4. Did the sampled patrons feel that the seventh and eighth graders in their school were or were not getting all the subjects necessary to successfully continue their education? The feelings were: yes-72 per cent, no-26 per cent, and no opinion-2 per cent.
5. Did the sampled patrons favor kindergarten instruction? The responses were: in favor-81 per cent, opposed-18 per cent, and no opinion-1 per cent.

6. How did the sampled patrons feel about the maximum miles, one-way, that a kindergarten child should have to travel in attending school? The percentage selecting these miles were: 1-3, 4 per cent, 4-6, 19 per cent, 7-9, 15 per cent, 10-12, 49 per cent, 13-15, 4 per cent, 16-18, 0 per cent, and 19-21, 1 per cent. Expressing no opinion were 9 per cent of the sampled patrons.
7. How did the sampled patrons feel about the maximum miles, one-way, that a seventh or eighth grader should have to travel in attending school? A distance between 10-15 miles was stated by 60 per cent of the patrons. The mode for miles indicated was 15.
8. According to the sampled patrons, how much teaching duty should a principal have in a school with an enrollment between 75-125 students? The feelings were: full-time-35 per cent, part-time-60 per cent, no-teaching-1 per cent, and no opinion-4 per cent.
9. How did the sampled patrons feel about the number of grades a teacher should have with a normal class load in a self-contained classroom? The feelings were: one grade-48 per cent, two grades-39 per cent, three or more grades-7 per cent, and

no opinion-6 per cent.

10. Did the sampled patrons prefer the departmentalized or the self-contained classroom for the instruction of seventh and eighth graders? The preferences were: departmentalized classroom-59 per cent, self-contained classroom-41 per cent, and no opinion-0 per cent.
11. What elementary educational specialists did the sampled patrons feel should be available to an elementary school? The percentage selecting the following specialists were: speech therapist-52, music instructor-96, psychologist-12, art instructor-21, guidance counselor-10, physical education instructor-41, school nurse-42, remedial reading instructor-61, and none necessary-1.
12. Did the sampled patrons favor a unified district having a program to care for mentally retarded children? The feelings were: in favor-74 per cent, opposed-22 per cent, no opinion-4 per cent.
13. Did the sampled patrons favor a text-book rental plan for the schools of the unified district? The feelings were: In favor-95 per cent, opposed-5 per cent, and no opinion-0 per cent.
14. Did the sampled patrons favor or oppose seventh and eighth graders riding on the same bus as

high school students in attending school? The feelings were: in favor-45 per cent, opposed-52 per cent, and no opinion-3 per cent.

15. What subjects did the sampled patrons feel should be available to a seventh and eighth grade student? The percentage selecting the following subjects were: wood work-27, industrial arts-23, home economics-35, foreign languages-29, music-88, physical education-71, and art-42. The percentage that felt none was necessary was 2 per cent.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings in the study, it is possible to conclude the following about the attitudes and feelings of the majority of the patrons in the study area. These attitudes and feelings were:

1. They felt their school building, school equipment, instruction, and program of studies for the seventh and eighth grades were satisfactory.
2. They were in agreement with the salaries of their present teachers.
3. They favored kindergarten instruction, a textbook rental plan, and a program to care for mentally retarded children.
4. They felt a kindergarten child should not have to travel over 12 miles, one-way, in attending school. Also, they felt a seventh or eighth grader should not have to travel over 15 miles, one-way, attending school.
5. They felt seventh and eighth graders should not have to ride on the same bus as high school students in attending school.
6. They felt their principals should have only part-time teaching duty.
7. The largest group felt it was best to have a grade per teacher in a self-contained classroom



with a normal amount of students.

8. They preferred the departmentalized classroom over the self-contained classroom for the instruction of seventh and eighth graders.
9. They felt the following special education personnel should be available to an elementary school: speech therapist, remedial reading expert, and music instructor.

Also, it appeared that the patrons tended to evaluate services that their schools already had as useful, but were not as sure about some new program or special service. For example, the Talmage school was the only school that had a part-time teaching principal and 90 per cent of the Talmage patrons indicated they were in agreement with this. The schools that had a full-time teaching principal did not indicate so strongly that they were in favor of a part-time teaching principal.

In relation to special service personnel, 96 per cent of the patrons felt that a music teacher should be available. The only other special service person that received considerable emphasis by the patrons was a remedial reading teacher, whom 61 per cent of the patrons felt should be available to an elementary school. The point that needs to be made is that a music instructor was the only special service person available to any of the schools at the time of the study. In other words, the writer feels that it is possible to

hypothesize to this extent in relation to these findings: generally the patrons tended to value programs and special service persons available to their schools, but appeared to be hesitant about formulating a similar opinion about some program or special service person that was not being utilized in their school.

However, an inconsistency to the hypothesis was that the patrons felt departmentalization was better than the self-contained classroom for the seventh and eighth grades. At the time of the study, all of the schools, except one, were using the self-contained classroom for the instruction of grades seven and eight.

In general, it can be said that the patrons were satisfied with their schools, but at the same time they did indicate the need for certain educational and instructional change within their schools.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the findings in the study, the writer has these recommendations to suggest for the schools in the study area.

Special education personnel who should be employed include a speech therapist, remedial reading expert, physical education instructor, school nurse and a specialist in teaching handicapped or mentally retarded children. Music instructors should continue to be employed as the patrons value this prodigiously.

A kindergarten program to serve all the pre-school children in the area should be implemented. Because of the proximity of some of the schools to each other, kindergarten would not have to be offered at each particular school building, but could be offered at centrally located attendance units. In order to do this, the majority of the kindergarten students would not have to be transported over 12 miles, one-way.

A plan or program should be developed and implemented to teach the handicapped and mentally retarded school-age children in the study area.

A uniform text-book rental plan should be made operative and available for the patrons of the schools in the study area.

Consideration should be given to alleviating the load

of the teaching principals in the schools of the study area. Perhaps, a full-time principal could be made responsible for several of the schools in the study area. In all probability, two or three full-time principals, with no teaching duties, could assume this responsibility for the eight schools in the study area.

At this time, the writer does not recommend transporting seventh and eighth graders to the Chapman Junior High School. However, this possibility should receive careful consideration in the near future. By sending the seventh and eighth graders to the Chapman Junior High School, it would be possible to arrange the instruction of the existing elementary schools on a K-6 basis with a teacher per grade. Four of the schools in the study area would lend themselves well to such a plan. Such a plan should not be implemented without taking into careful consideration the concerns of the patrons. It appears to the writer that an opinion survey similar to this one would be valuable if conducted in another three or four years to determine if the attitudes of the patrons have changed or remained constant.

Also, it is recommended that whenever possible, kindergarten children should not be transported over 12 miles, one-way, in attending school. Seventh and eighth graders should not be transported on the same bus with high school students in attending school and should not be transported over 15 miles, one-way, in attending school.

In summary, the writer believes that if the administrators and board of education of Unified School District No. 473 take these recommendations into consideration in their decision-making, the schools in the study area will have an improved educational program and the concerns of the patrons will have been recognized.



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APPENDIX

Rural Route 1  
Abilene, Kansas  
December 6, 1965

Dear Sir:

The enclosed questionnaire has been sent to approximately one-half of the parents who have children in one of these schools: Navarre, Rural Center, Carlton, Manchester, Talmage, Detroit, Upland, or Blue Ridge. The purpose of the questionnaire is to determine the attitude of the patrons toward their own elementary schools and certain other educational ideas and programs.

This study, which has the approval of the Kansas State University Department of Education, will help me fulfill the requirements for a Masters Degree in Education.

The results of this study will be analyzed, tabulated, and become a part of my Masters Research Report in Education. No type of educational action will be taken on the basis of this study.

Your response will be particularly appreciated and will be very important in order to make the study a success. It is hoped that the interest you have in your children's education will motivate you to answer the questionnaire right now. It has been tested by a sampling of people like you and it has been found that the average time required to complete it is fifteen minutes.

Please complete the questionnaire prior to December 13 and return it in the stamped, self-addressed envelope enclosed. Other phases of the research study cannot be carried out until the completed questionnaires are returned. You need not identify yourself on the questionnaire. Any comments concerning the questionnaire as to weaknesses and strengths will be appreciated.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely yours,



## QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Name the elementary school that is located in your district.

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Check the highest level completed by either husband or wife.

\_\_\_\_\_grade school

\_\_\_\_\_high school

\_\_\_\_\_college

In answering questions 3 through 6, consider your school as the elementary school named in question 1.

3. Indicate your personal evaluation of your present elementary school building and equipment.

\_\_\_\_\_excellent

\_\_\_\_\_good

\_\_\_\_\_fair

\_\_\_\_\_poor

\_\_\_\_\_no opinion

4. How do you evaluate the over-all instruction of the pupils in your elementary school?

\_\_\_\_\_good

\_\_\_\_\_poor

\_\_\_\_\_fair

\_\_\_\_\_excellent

\_\_\_\_\_no opinion

5. Do you feel that the salaries your elementary teachers are getting are:

\_\_\_\_\_ about right

\_\_\_\_\_ too low

\_\_\_\_\_ too high

\_\_\_\_\_ no opinion

6. In your judgment, do the seventh and eighth graders in your elementary school get all the subjects necessary to successfully continue their education?

\_\_\_\_\_ yes

\_\_\_\_\_ no

Assuming that the following programs would not involve sharp increases in taxes, please indicate your feelings about them.

7. Do you favor kindergarten instruction?

\_\_\_\_\_ yes

\_\_\_\_\_ no

8. In an elementary school with an enrollment between 75 and 125 pupils, should the principal also have:

\_\_\_\_\_ full-day teaching duty

\_\_\_\_\_ part-day teaching duty

\_\_\_\_\_ no teaching duty

\_\_\_\_\_ no opinion

9. Assuming that an elementary teacher has a normal load of around twenty-five pupils in a self-contained classroom (class where one teacher instructs almost all subjects) would you be in favor of him teaching:

\_\_\_\_\_ one grade

- \_\_\_\_\_two grades
- \_\_\_\_\_three or more grades
- \_\_\_\_\_no opinion

10. What is the longest one-way distance kindergarten children should travel to school?

\_\_\_\_\_miles

11. Check the type of organization you feel is better for grades seven and eight.

- \_\_\_\_\_self-contained classroom  
(basic subjects taught by one teacher)
- \_\_\_\_\_departmentalized classrooms  
(subjects taught by specialized teachers of their fields)

12. Check the educational specialists you feel should be available to an elementary school.

- \_\_\_\_\_speech therapist
- \_\_\_\_\_music instructor
- \_\_\_\_\_psychologist
- \_\_\_\_\_remedial reading expert
- \_\_\_\_\_art instructor
- \_\_\_\_\_guidance instructor
- \_\_\_\_\_physical education instructor
- \_\_\_\_\_school nurse
- \_\_\_\_\_none of the above

Indicate others you feel are necessary\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

13. Do you think a unified district should have some type of program to care for mentally retarded children?

\_\_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_\_no

14. Would you favor a text book rental system for all the elementary pupils in the unified district?

\_\_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_\_no

15. Which of the following do you think should be available for seventh and eighth grade pupils?

|                        |                         |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| _____wood work         | _____music              |
| _____industrial arts   | _____physical education |
| _____foreign languages | _____art                |
| _____home economics    | _____none of the above  |

Indicate others you feel are necessary\_\_\_\_\_

16. What is the longest distance one-way any seventh or eighth grade pupil should travel to school?

\_\_\_\_\_miles

17. How do you feel about seventh and eighth graders riding on the same bus as high school students in attending school?

\_\_\_\_\_in favor

\_\_\_\_\_opposed

ATTITUDES OF PATRONS IN UNIFIED SCHOOL  
DISTRICT NO. 473 TOWARD SELECTED  
EDUCATIONAL IDEAS AND PROGRAMS

by

MARTIN HENRY HELMER

B. S., McPherson College, 1961

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AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

College of Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY  
Manhattan, Kansas

1966



The study area consisted of eight elementary school districts which recently became a part of Unified School District No. 473 with offices at Chapman, Kansas. The purpose of the study was: 1. To determine how the sampled patrons evaluated their present elementary schools in terms of teacher salaries, building and equipment, instruction, and program of studies for grades seven and eight. 2. To determine how the sampled patrons felt about certain elementary educational programs, special services, and certain types of administrative and instructional organization that may come about in Unified School District No. 473. 3. To determine how the sampled patrons felt about the maximum miles, one-way, that kindergarten pupils and seventh and eighth grade students should travel in attending school.

A review of literature was made concerning the use of the school survey as a means of identifying the concerns, attitudes and feelings of the patrons toward their schools and then acting upon these findings to improve the quality of education and gain increased patronage support for the schools.

Data was collected to gain an understanding of the study area and to develop a questionnaire from these sources: books and periodicals in the Kansas State University library, records of the Dickinson County Superintendent of Schools, patrons of the study area, bulletins from the Kansas State Department of Education, and the administrators and board of

education of Unified School District No. 473.

The study area had a total of 290 sets of elementary school parents. Questionnaires were sent to 145 sets of parents who were selected on the basis of random sampling. An equal percentage of parents were selected from each school in the study area. Completed questionnaires were returned by 79 per cent of the sampled patrons.

The sampled patrons indicated they were satisfied with their present schools, but also indicated the desire for certain organizational and instructional change.

Based on the feelings of the majority of the sampled patrons, the following recommendations were made. School programs which should be implemented are: kindergarten instruction, uniform text-book rental plan, classes for mentally retarded children, and special service personnel including a speech therapist, remedial reading instructor, school nurse, physical education instructor, and a teacher for mentally retarded children. Other recommendations were: to alleviate the teaching load of the teaching principals, to transport kindergarten students to centrally located school units, so the majority will not have to travel over 12 miles, one-way, in attending school, and to segregate seventh and eighth grade students from high school students while they are transported to and from school. Provisions should be made so that seventh and eighth grade students do not have to travel over 15 miles, one-way, in attending

school. It was also recommended that at the present time the seventh and eighth continue to attend the schools they have attended in the past. However, the idea of sending seventh and eighth graders to the Chapman Junior High and converting the existing elementary schools in the study area to K-6 types of instructional organization should receive careful consideration in the near future.